Recycling of waste bio-mass

@1265. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any major Research and Development work on recycling of waste bio-mass in the country has been undertaken;

(b) whether the need to set up a national-level institute for bio-degradation has been projected;

(c) whether Punjab has been considered for this project in view of the availability of huge quantities of paddy and wheat bio-mass; and

(d) if so, what is the progress made in the matter so far?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) Yes, Sir. Research and Development work undertaken in various laboratories in the country has made it possible to launch a major programme of installation of family as well as larger sized biogas plants which re-cycle biomass such as animal and human waste. More than eight lakh biogas plants have already been installed in the country under the above programme. Pilot experimental plants have also been set up for generating biogas from composite agricultural wastes, industrial effluents such as distillery spentwash, acquatic weeds etc. Use of waste biomass for energy purpoes through gasification, pelletisation and special incineration is also being developed. Further research work in this area is in progress.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Considering the surplus availability of agricultural residues in Punjab mainly paddy straw and husk, two agro residue based thermal power generation projects of 10 MW and 2.5 MW have been taken up in Patiala and Khanna Districts in Association with Punjab State Electricity Board and Punjab Agro Industries Corporation respectively. These projects are in the initial stages of implementation. Wheat straw is not a waste as it is being utilised as fodder.

Drilling of oil wells in West Bengal

1266. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY. Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of places where drilling work for oil has started in West Bengal; and

(b) the results achieved so far in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) Drilling is at present going on in Palasi, Raghunath and Domjure in West Bengal.

(b) So far no commercial discovery of oil/gas has been made in West Bengal.

Wrongful occupation of houses by the retired officers/employees of big companies

1267. SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any complaints have been received by the Company Law Board regarding the inaction on the part of some big companies in Bombay and New Delhi in not invoking the provisions of Section 630 of the Companies Act, 1956 read with the recent judgement of the Supreme Court and getting the wrongful occupation of residential houses leased by these companies for the use of their retired Officers/employees, va-

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@Previously Unstarred Question 1056 transferred from the 5th May, 1988.